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Sports first aid makes schools safer

Every school has a responsibility to provide a safe environment for its students. Injury management is a key component of providing such a surrounding, especially when it comes to school sport.

By schools having personnel who are equipped to deal with injury and access to the correct equipment and facilities, they are better able to respond to emergency situations.

To help schools prepare for injuries, Smartplay, Sports Medicine Australia's sports injury prevention program funded by VicHealth and the Department of Planning and Community Development (Sport and Recreation Victoria) outlines three components of injury management that should be adopted.

- 1) School personnel trained in sports first aid
- 2) A fully stocked first aid kit
- 3) A dedicated first aid room where injuries can be attended to

Sports first aid courses

School aged children (5-14 year olds) incur the highest rate of injuries requiring treatment and affecting performance or participation in activity. Among this age group almost one quarter of all injury-related hospital admissions and 20 per cent of emergency department presentations occur in the school environment.

It is therefore necessary that those involved in supervising school sport, whether it be teachers or parents, know what to do in case injury strikes.

Time is critical in the event of an injury and knowing what to do in those first few minutes can prevent serious injury or even help save a life. To help become familiar with what to do in the event of an emergency, a sports first aid course is recommended.

Knowing sports first aid makes an enormous difference to a person's ability to deal with injuries and provides the skills on how to use first aid equipment efficiently and effectively to reduce the severity of injuries.

Sports Medicine Australia (Victorian Branch) offers sports first aid courses focusing on crisis management, skin injuries, management and referral of sports injuries, external bleeding and transporting the injured athlete. For further information or to enrol in these courses phone 03 9674 8777, email ssp@vic.sma.org.au or visit www.smavic.org



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First aid kit

Knowing how to use a first aid kit is important for managing injuries. Its contents can vary depending on the nature of the sport or activity, the risk of injury for players, the types of injuries that occur and the budget of your school, however a basic first aid kit should contain:

- Adhesive dressing strips
- Triangular bandages
- Bandages
- Eye pads
- Wound dressings
- Adhesive tape
- Sterowipes (alcohol swabs) or iodine sachets
- Saline Steritubes (minimum 10ml)
- Sterile eyewash bottle
- Scissors
- Tweezers
- Safety pins
- Disposable gloves
- Resuscitation mask/face shield
- First aid booklet
- Note pad and pencil

It is also important that first aid kits are managed regularly. This means replacing used items to ensure the first aid kit is always prepared to deal with injury.

For more information on where to obtain contents for a first aid kit contact Club Warehouse on phone 03 9419 7344 or www.clubwarehouse.com.au

First aid room

To further manage injuries, it is important that schools have a well maintained treatment area, such as a designated first aid room.

Within this room the following items should be accessible:

- First aid kit and stretcher
- Access to clean water, and bowls to hold water
- An area to examine someone
- Refrigerator to store cold packs, medical supplies and ice
- Lockable cabinet to store records and supplies
- Disposable hand towels, soap and nail brush



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- Movable screen
- Chairs for the patient and accompanying person
- Three separate refuse containers for sharps, contaminated waste and other waste
- Electric power outlets
- Lamp
- Crutches
- Resuscitation mask
- Clock with second hand
- List of emergency contacts and procedures posted in room and near telephone

For further information on first aid rooms, download the *What Do You Need for a Sports First Aid Kit and Treatment Room* brochure at www.smartplay.com.au

By adopting these three components of injury management school sport injuries can be better handled and children can get back to enjoying physical activity sooner.

For further information visit www.smartplay.com.au, phone 03 9674 8777 or email smartplay@vic.sma.org.au